

Good News:

Wisconsin Communities have Effective Tools to Reduce Underage Drinking

About half of Wisconsin's High School students report taking their first real drink of alcohol at age 14 or earlier. And when drinking begins at age 14 or younger, their lifetime chance of alcohol dependence or abuse rises to 41%. That's a heavy price for youthful misjudgment. But communities can fight back.

When alcohol is less **available, attractive or affordable**, youth have fewer opportunities and less interest in drinking. Here's what your community can do:

Make Alcohol Less **AVAILABLE** to Youth in Your Community

- Refuse to purchase, provide or pour alcohol for underage youth in your home and tell other family members, especially older siblings that you don't serve teens in your home.
- Create and enforce family sanctions if you discover your child is drinking or providing alcohol to their friends. Be firm, creative and bring other parents into the program - as a group you can impact community norms and standards.
- Support alcohol age compliance checks and severe penalties for retailers selling alcohol to youth.
- Secure your family alcohol supplies to prevent unauthorized garage raids by overly adventurous pre-teens and teens.
- Support police "party patrol" efforts to identify and disperse illegal underage house parties; call the police when you see underage drinking or out-of-control house parties.
- Support law enforcement efforts to prosecute adults who pour, provide or purchase alcohol for youth.
- Support municipal and district judges who take a tough stand on underage drinking. Local judges can be both creative and firm when they have community backing.
- Adopt an "unruly child" ordinance holding parents responsible for multiple underage drinking incidents within 12-18 months.
- Require all events applying for a Class B temporary "picnic" license to adopt security measures targeting underage drinkers, including securing the area, checking ID's and using wrist bracelets, single purchase limits, and similar proven practices. Licensees failing to comply are ineligible of future licenses.

Make Alcohol Less **ATTRACTIVE** to Youth in Your Community

- Amend community zoning laws to ban alcohol advertising within 500 feet of school, church or park.
- Ask local merchants to display alcohol away from products for children such as breakfast cereal and soda.
- Object to in-store merchandising featuring toys, model cars and other items appealing to youth. Such displays may violate the alcohol industry code of advertising banning the use of “toys or icons of childhood.”)
- Adopt or enforce existing prohibitions against licensed establishments adjacent to or near schools and churches, places children will regularly congregate.
- Insist interscholastic athletes accept and respect Code of Conduct banning alcohol use, and support coaches and Athletic Directors who sanction violators.

Make Alcohol Less **AFFORDABLE** to Youth in Your Community

- Community sanctions are ordinance violations, a municipal offense that does not necessarily create a criminal record but can impose meaningful and expensive sanctions on youth.
- Create ordinances that limit consumption-based drink specials such as “fishbowls” and “all you can drink” specials or limits on multiple pitcher purchases to reduce the likelihood that very inexpensive legally purchased alcohol is passed to underage drinkers.
- Support ordinances with substantial fines for underage drinking. Support the smart parents and guardians who make youth responsible for paying the forfeitures. After all, even good kids benefit from experiencing the consequences of their own actions.

